

COMIC LEGENDARY CHRISTMAS CAROL.

THE MAGIC PITCHER.

ONE INTO PLAIN ENGLISH FROM THE CLASSIC GERMAN BY J. ARBY STERRY AND ALFRED SHWIGLIE.

It was once on a time, as the story-books say, There lived in the Schwarzwald a Baron so gay, So jovial and hearty, so fond of good cheer, And he passed all his days there in hunting the deer; His evenings he spent at his Schloss, where, I'm thinking, But little went on besides eating and drinking; And old chroniclers tell us—and they ought to know— That the "carrying-on" there was not come to a head. It was long ago—at a most remote date— When the matter occurred which I have to relate; It was long before days of madness and worry Engendered by railways with Bradshaw and Murray; Long before there were tables at which you might bet, Or could lose half a fortune each day at roulette; Or they made cuckoo-clocks and those horrid cigars, Or the "Führer" was written by Dr. Carl Schenker; In short, long before we arrived at that line meant By moderns when ever they talk of refinement, The depths of the forest were marshy and sodden, The trees were unshewn, and the grass was untrod; There was scarcely a hut or a human abode, There was hardly a pathway, and much less a road! Whilst the glades were so haunted with spirits of evil, Or good little fairies, who played such vagaries— With sprites ever tricky, and brownie and pixie— Who could not be quiet, but made such a riot— That the forest itself was a forest primal! There the Baron resided—I said this before— And perhaps the digression you'll reckon a boy (But I must introduce this little variety To show his high status in foreign society). Now he owned all the land there—a very good reason— And lived in a castle ancient and bold, With cellar beneath constructed to hold Large vats filled with wine of number untold, Which served very well to keep out the cold, When his guests came to see him and hunt all the season. 'Twas hunting one day, that the Baron so gay, And his friends who drank deeply at nights, Each began to feel dry, and anxious to try, Any liquor to set him to rights. The Baron spoke up, as he drained off a cup, And scowled at his friends, and he burst— "I'll give yellow gold, or a butt of wine old, To him who will quench me this thirst!" They gave him cold water—he roared like a lion— It fizzed off his tongue as it would a hot iron; They filled up the wine cup, filled higher and higher, But poor Baron Fritz became dryer and dryer, Till just as he thought he was going to expire, There arose from the grass a most comely young lass, Whose beauty and brightness none e'er could surpass. As sweetest music her approach then heralded, She looked like a picture Mr. Fitzgerald did, With her long fair hair all rippling down, Soft gauzy wings and a jeweled crown; With eyes so blue and so wondrous bright, They made Fritz wink with their brilliant light! (The Baron tried hard then his fears to whistle down, As light she swung on the dust of this-world-down). "I'm good Fairy Ripple," she sang with a laugh; "And bring you my pitcher and ask you to quaff; It will moisten your throat and will brighten your eye; As long as you have it you'll never feel dry. Drink, but not deeply, or some day you will rue Receiving the pitcher I give unto you!" Then most sweetly she smiled, and, ceasing to sing, Soon flew out of sight on a dragon fly's wing. Then Fritz quickly started, and gave a great yawn, And looked round for his friends, but found they were gone; Then thought he'd been dreaming, but as he jumped up, Saw sparkling beside him the gold-jeweled cup. He seized it at once, and he took a good draught. He sprang, and he danced, as he shouted and laughed. 'Twas better than feed either water and hock, And cooler than licking a Wexham Lake block; 'Twas finer than Chateau, or sold and B., It struck the nerves better than strongest of tea, Baron Fritz, after drinking, hung the cup by a chain Round his neck, in case e'er he should want it again. And he very soon did so, for homewards he rolled, With his lips always touching that pitcher of gold. Said he, "I'll amuse my guests over their tippie With the wondrous tale of the good Fairy Ripple." (He found all the time to himself he'd been talking, O'er shoes, in the water so cold, he'd been walking.) Then he wished that his castle was somewhat nigher, And could not make out why the road was not dryer— Was really afraid that the water was higher— When he heard a moan, and an awful groan! And the Baron then found he was not alone!! A fierce gaunt Dryad, with tangled rough ragged hair, He saw there, shaking his ugly old jagged head: A grunted old face, a bumpy nose, Branches for fingers, tendrils for toes; Out of his forehead growing two trees,

To nod and away in the evening breeze, He shouted at Fritz, and then fiercely he frowned did— "Put down that pitcher, or you're sure to be drowned!" O horror! Fritz started, for 'neath the moon gleam, From his pitcher he saw there was flowing a stream; Then he felt that his blood was beginning to freeze, As the water came rippling up to his knees! He tugged at the pitcher, 'twas piteous to see, For the chain was entangled, he could not get free! Then reeling and staggering over the boulders, He found that the water was up to his shoulders. In a moment he tripped in the current so fleet, Next he stumbled and fell, and was borne on his feet. Sure a sturdy swimmer like Fritz cannot drown, But that pitcher is heavy, and weighs him down. The water closed o'er him and swept him away, As he thought he heard voices seeming to say— "Drink, but not deeply, or some day you will rue Receiving the pitcher I give unto you!"

Widows Out of Place. The Pall Mall Gazette says—"Mr. Rowback said, not very long ago, in one of his caustic speeches, that the proceedings in the Divorce Court had at any rare done good service in exposing the cant of the middle classes, when they claimed to be more 'moral' than the aristocracy. In a similar spirit many people will be refreshed by finding that the 'young lady housekeeper' system is by no means without its adherents, within the very Low Church and Dissenting circles. A 'young Christian widow lady' desires a re-engagement as housekeeper to a gentleman. She is, moreover, her advertisement assures us, 'very domesticated, cheerful, obliging, and musical.' It is surprising that she does not stipulate that she will only engage herself to a 'Christian gentleman.' In the same column where she makes the announcement another 'young widow lady' wishes 'to superintend a widower's household,' and 'would not object to the supervision of a young child.'"

From Canada. QUEBEC, December 20.—The parish church of St. Agathe, Lotbiniere, was totally destroyed by fire on Sunday. The church was insured for \$1000. The Chronicle predicts the failure of the proposed line of steamers between Lake Ontario and the Gulf ports. OTTAWA, December 20.—The expenditures in Canada for military purposes since the 1st of January, 1866, have been over \$2,000,000.

The Marezek Libel Suit. New York, December 20.—The jury in the libel suit of Marezek vs. Sunday Mercury today brought in a verdict of one thousand dollars for the plaintiff. The defendants gave notice of appeal.

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